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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 002719

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CCA AND WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/06/2014

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SUBJECT: TEGUCIGALPA RESPONSE TO NSC-DIRECTED REVIEW
REGARDING WAIVER OF TITLE III OF THE LIBERTAD ACT

REF: STATE 248337

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Roger Pierce;
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) The Government of Honduras (GOH) has actively worked to advance democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms in Cuba. On April 15, the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) passed a Honduran-sponsored resolution calling for greater respect for human rights in Cuba. The Government of Cuba responded to the GOH's action by suspending pending maritime boundary negotiations with Honduras, an item which was a foreign policy priority of President Ricardo Maduro's administration. Also, while the GOH does have formal diplomatic relations with Cuba, Honduras has not named an Ambassador to Cuba, partly out of deference to U.S. wishes. The GOH consistently and publicly states that concern over Cuba's human rights policies is a fundamental tenet of its policy toward the Castro regime. PolCouns met with the new Honduran Charge d'Affaires in Havana, Humberto Lopez Villamil, prior to his recent departure to Havana to emphasize the importance of human rights in Cuba. Villamil welcomed the meeting and indicated he would seek out the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.

2. (C) In addition, the GOH has agreed to accept 18 Cubans from Guantanamo. The GOH is doing this despite a possible negative reaction from the GOC.

3. (SBU) Post has no information available on investments made in Cuba by Honduran individuals or companies. The Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Central Bank collect information on foreign investments made in Honduras, grouped by country of origin, but have never collected information on Honduran investments abroad. This year, for the first time, the Central Bank has added a question on Honduran investment abroad to its annual questionnaire of Honduran companies. They hope to compare the data received from this question with information that other governments provide on Honduran foreign investment in their countries. In the future, therefore, this information should become available.

4. (C) If the Title III waiver were not renewed for Honduras, it could undermine clear GOH support for pressuring Cuba to improve its human rights record, undermine general GOH support for U.S. Cuba policy, and unnecessarily punish a supportive regional ally.
Palmer